

Message Text

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11

ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SS-20 NSC-07 CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-10

NSAE-00 PA-04 RSC-01 USIA-15 PRS-01 SPC-03 PM-07

SAM-01 SAJ-01 DRC-01 /097 W
----- 035322

P R 210747Z MAR 74

FM AMEMBASSY PRAGUE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5928

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMCONSUL MUNICH

C O N F I D E N T I A L PRAGUE 0561

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS, PINT, PINR, CZ, UR

SUBJECT: THEFT OF ASHES OF FORMER CZECHOSLOVAK LEADER SMRKOVSKY

1. WESTERN CORRESPONDENTS HERE TELL US THEY ARE REPORTING THAT ASHES OF JOSEF SMKROVSKY, WHO DIED JANUARY 15 AND WAS CREMATED JANUARY 18, WERE STOLEN AFTER INTERMENT.

2. PERSON IN CONTACT WITH MEMBERS OF SMRKOVSKY FAMILY TELLS US ASHES WERE INTERRED IN UNMARKED FAMILY PLOT AT PRAGUE OLSANY CEMETARY FEBRUARY 28, AFTER WHICH WIDOW LEFT PRAGUE FOR STAY IN SOUTHERN BOHEMIA. WHILE SHE WAS GONE, POLICE INFORMED OTHER FAMILY MEMBERS THAT TOMB HAD BEEN VIOLATED, AND SHOWED PHOTOGRAPHS OF TOMB BEFORE AND AFTER IT HAD BEEN BROKEN INTO. LATER URN WAS FOUND IN MEN'S ROOM AT RAILROOD STATION AT CESKE VELENICE, LAST STATION BEFORE BORDER ON PRAGUE-VIENNA LINE. FAMILY IS SAID TO BE SERIOUSLY DISTRAUGHT.

3. OUR GUESS WOULD BE THAT THIS WAS KGB OPERATION, CRUDELY DESIGNED TO MAKE IT APPEAR THAT SOMEONE WAS TRYING TO SPIRIT
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SMRKOVSKY'S ASHES OUT OF COUNTRY FOR BURIAL IN EXILE ABROAD.

WE DOUBT ANY SANE CZECH PATRIOT WOULD WISH TO DO THIS; NOR IS
IT LIKELY THAT EVEN SOMEONE SLIGHTLY IRRATIONAL WOULD TRY TO
CARRY URN OUT OF CZECHOSLOVAKIA BY PASSENGER TRAIN.
WORTZEL

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NNN

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